

Progress Report

To: Natalia Deardorff, Department of Water Resources
From: Robert Stein, City of Newport Beach
Re: Integrated Regional Watershed Management Plan – Newport Bay
Watershed
DWR Agreement Number 46-0000-4498
Progress Report #4
Report Period: February 1 to May 31, 2007
Date: June 28, 2007

Program Status

This report summarizes important activities performed in this period. A chart showing task progress is attached.

Task 2.4.2.1 Review Existing Studies and Programs

Task completed.

Task 2.4.2.2 Survey of Local Planning Efforts

Previously: The City has continued with watershed stakeholder meetings including the County of Orange RDMD, Regional Water Quality Control Board, Irvine Company, Irvine Ranch Water District, and University of California – Irvine to discuss ongoing studies and program and to review the City's scope of work under this DWR grant.

Update: Additional meetings have occurred with the Cities of Tustin, Irvine, Lake Forest and Santa Ana, as well as the Upper Newport Bay Friends and Naturalists. Meetings are also anticipated with the Army Corps of Engineers, California Department of Fish and Game and other agencies.

Task 2.4.2.3 Presentation of Findings to Watershed Strategic Committee (WSC) Group and Watershed Executive Committee (WEC)

In cooperation with the County of Orange, a series of meetings have been held with the WSC Group made up of staff from the cities in the watershed, Irvine Ranch Water District, County Sanitation District, Surfriders, and Stop Polluting Our Newport (SPON). This group has been renamed as the Watershed Stakeholder Committee.

Based on these meetings, as well as the meetings conducted under Task 2.4.2.2, a preliminary list of future projects and studies has been prepared and our included in the draft Central Orange County Integrated Regional and Coastal Watershed Management Plan.

Task 2.4.2.4 Preparation of Policy and Prioritization Guidelines

No work on this task occurred during this period.

Task 2.4.2.5 GIS Subcommittee

Based on discussions with the County of Orange and consultants, it appears the path of least resistance is to setup process where the separate databases maintained by the County Orange RDMD, Orange County Health Care Agency, SCCWRP, City of Newport Beach, UCI etc. can be accessed via the internet through a database 'mall'. As initially envisioned, the internet mall would have a list of web addresses where the interested party can peruse data from different agencies. Each agency will be responsible for keeping its own database up to date and will decide what data it will make available to the public.

As an auxiliary task, the City will investigate if the data fields for each agency can be standardized to facilitate manipulation and analysis of downloaded data.

Task 2.4.2.6 GIS Database Expansion

The City's GIS department will try an experiment of loading selected pollutant data from Newport Bay to see how easy it is to incorporate the data into our system and also to investigate the challenges for subsequently accessing the data.

Task 2.4.2.7 Web Site Development

A contract has been executed with S4S to setup a web portal for the evolving Newport Bay Watershed Management Plan. The portal will be initially set up to facilitate discussion between naturalists and environmentalists on the ecological vision for the watershed. As the management evolves, the portal will be used to allow viewing of the status of individual projects, budgets, and schedules based on the level of authorization granted the individual user. The web portal is expected to be on-line in August.

Task 2.4.3.1 Lower Newport Bay Management Plan

Weston Solutions was selected to prepare the Harbor Area Management Plan. Weston is scheduled to begin work in July.

Task 2.4.3.2 Upper Newport Bay Management Plan

Previously: The County of Orange is the lead on preparing a plan for upper Newport Bay. The City, Upper Newport Bay Naturalists and other stakeholders are coordinating with the County on this effort. One of the tasks in the HAMP (Task 1) is a review of previous work on a management plan and to provide recommendations for additional biological assessments, habitat restoration and public usage to meet the future needs of Department of Fish and Game (DFG)

Update: A meeting will be setup in July with DFG to discuss the framework for a management plan for Upper Bay.

Task 2.4.3.3 – Newport Bay/San Diego Creek Watershed Strategic Plan

Previously: Staff will be going to City Council on March 27 to ask Council to award a consultant contract for preparation of the Integrated Regional Watershed Management Plan (IRWMP) that will include the San Diego Creek sub-watershed

area. The consultant will be charged with preparing a 'streamlined' IRWMP by August 1, 2007. This will provide the foundation for the final IRWMP to be prepared in the Task 2.4.3.4.

Update: The city has worked collaboratively with Irvine Ranch Water District and the County of Orange to prepare an initial watershed management plan for the watershed. A draft is currently out to stakeholders for review and will be submitted August 1 to the SWRCB as a support document to a Proposition 50 grant application. Much of the background information in the initial watershed management plan will be incorporated into the Integrated Regional Watershed Management Plan (Task 2.4.3.4).

Task 2.4.3.4 - Integrated Regional Watershed Management Plan

Important work has been done to kickoff development of an ecological vision for the watershed. A series of meetings with the Upper Newport Bay Friends and Naturalists has focused on framing a feasible ecological protection and restoration program.

Discussions have also been held regarding developing a prioritization process for projects and studies that should be performed over the next 10-15 years.

Budget

Four contracts have been awarded in this period totaling \$466,400.

1. S4S has been hired to create a web portal (Task 2.4.2.7). [\$20,000]
2. Weston Solution has been contracted to prepare the Harbor Area Management Plan (Tasks 2.4.3.1 and 2.4.3.2). [\$345,000]
3. Larry Paul and Associates has been hired to assist the City in managing the HAMP contract. [\$30,000]
4. Connective Issues has been awarded a contract to assist with the initial watershed management plan being prepared in cooperation with IRWD (Task 2.4.3.3) and to frame the essential tasks for the Final IRWMP (Task 2.4.3.4). [\$71,400]

Previous contracts totaling \$75,000 have been executed. Total value of contract to date is \$541,400. The total available budget (City and grant funds) excluding City in-lieu contributions is \$648,800.

Schedule

Very good progress continues to be made. The City anticipates that additional time past the contract deadline of January 2, 2008 will be needed to complete all the tasks under Tasks 2.4.3. A 6-month extension will be requested.

Attachment:

Task Progress Chart